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S E C R E T KUWAIT 004653

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DNG: CO 10/31/2015

TAGS: [PTER](#) [KU](#) [TERRORISM](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR TELLS KEY KUWAITI MINISTER MORE C/T
CAPACITY NEEDED

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (B)

11. (S/NF) During the course of a 30 October conversation on other topics with Shaykh Ahmad Fahd Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Ambassador told the Minister that, while cooperation on counter-terrorism between Kuwait and the U.S. has improved in the last 6-8 months, we are not satisfied and more needs to be done. There are still large gaps in the GOK's capabilities, for example, in monitoring of suspected terrorists or their facilitators in Kuwait. Shaykh Ahmad (brother of KSS Chief Shaykh Athbi) seemed surprised, and a bit dejected, by this assessment. He said that, from his latest information, the Kuwait intelligence and security apparatus was "100% on top of it" and that it was "working at full capacity." Ambassador noted that the GOK was far from prepared for the eventuality of Kuwaiti, Saudi or Egyptian terrorists leaving Iraq and setting their sites on Kuwait. Once that process got underway, it would be too late to start preparing. Shaykh Ahmad agreed that Kuwait (and Dubai) was "among the most inviting" targets for future attacks. He admitted that there was a "shortage of staff" in the Kuwaiti agencies. He said that he would raise the Ambassador's concerns with Shaykh Athbi.

12. (S/NF) Comment: Shaykh Ahmad is not a routine interlocutor on C/T affairs, but rather a target of opportunity. In addition to the relationship to Athbi, he is well-connected to Shaykh Sabah and takes an active interest in issues well beyond his already broad energy, water, and electricity portfolio.

LEBARON